of the liberal and sympathetic administration during Your Highness' reign. On our part we humbly beg to assure Your Highness that we shall always try to loyally discharge our duties to the best of our ability and in the interests of the State as a whole and thus to deserve the confidence Your Highness has been pleased to repose in us. We now pray that Your Highness may have a long, happy and glorious reign and that God may shower His choicest blessings on Your Highness and on those near and dear to your heart.

It is a matter of gratification to us that Mr. C. W. E. Cotton, the Agent to the Governor-General, Madras States, has graced the occasion with his presence which indicates the interest of the Paramount Power in the growth of representative institutions in Indian States."

His Highness the Maharaja and the Political Agent were garlanded. They and His Highness the Elaya Raja left the Hall. Then, the President, before proroguing the Council, delivered the following address :—

" *Members of the Legislative Council,*

1. The functions fixed for the day are practically over, but, before proroguing the Council, it may be in the fitness of things that I should address a few words to you.

2. I consider it my good fortune that it has been rendered possible to associate my humble name with the name of His Gracious Highness, our first Maharaja, to welcome the elected and nominated representatives of the people of this ancient and historic State on this memorable occasion of the inauguration of our first Legislative Council.

3. Though ours is called a Legislative Council, its functions are not merely the making of laws. For mere legislative purposes we have already had a body who, though not elected, had been doing substantial

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

work in the past. You know that a Law Committee which consisted of seven officials and one non-official, was first started so long ago as 1895. This Committee continued its labours till 1905 when it ceased to exist. In 1916, the Darbar decided to resuscitate it and to appoint a small Standing Committee of two officials and two non-officials. In 1920, it was thought that, by enlarging the constitution, the work of the Committee would be more effectively performed, and, accordingly, the number of non-officials was increased to ten. The functions of these Committees were either advisory or clerical and they confined their attention mainly to the drafting of Regulations and rules in accordance with the wishes of Government. I consider it my duty that, on this day from which the Committee would cease to exist, the obligations of Government to the members of that body should be gratefully acknowledged and our thanks conveyed to them for gratuitous work well done.

4. When I took charge of the administration some three years ago, I found that the ground for the inauguration of a Legislative Council had been cleared by the issue of a Proclamation by His Highness the Maharaja. This Proclamation aimed at creating a sort of Popular Assembly and Legislative Council in one and it also contemplated the fixing of the Council's functions and the administration of its affairs by means of rules. The rules which had to be drawn up for the purpose naturally got mixed up and, when they were published for general information before submission to His Highness, they evoked a lot of hostile criticisms. His Highness on going through these criticisms considered that the whole scheme should be overhauled and the law on the subject regularly codified. Under His Highness' commands, I accordingly had the substantive and adjective laws separated, drafted, in lieu of the Proclamation, two Regulations and framed a set of rules under them. As a matter of fact,

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

practically a new scheme had to be drawn up, each variation from the original requiring His Highness' personal scrutiny and orders. The task was not easy. The constitution of a proper body of persons who would truly represent the several divergent interests in the State and the fixing of the powers with which the Council should be invested were particularly difficult. The electorate had to be constituted on a liberal but practical franchise. The number of general constituencies was made sufficiently large to represent all the common and major interests of the country while, as far as possible, effective representation of special and minor interests which might not otherwise receive adequate recognition was also provided for. The old proportion of non-official to official members as two to one was continued so that in all the Council's deliberations the popular voice might predominate.

5. Though this is the first time when the representatives of the people are admitted to take part in the administration of the State, His Highness' confidence in their culture and loyalty has been such that His Highness has been emboldened to invest you with powers which similar bodies in the sister States and in British India have only secured step by step after years of Government tutelage. The powers given to you are very wide indeed. You will have the privilege of being consulted on all important matters relating to administration. You will have the power of making laws and regulations. You may ask questions relating to all matters of public interest. You will be at liberty to place your well-considered views before Government by moving resolutions. And the most vital of administrative functions, namely the control of the finances, will be practically in your hands. Considering the very large number of educated ladies which our State has produced, a number not yet approached by any other State or District in India, it was essential that their claims should be recognised by not only

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

abolishing the differences of sex in franchisematters but also by inducing them to come forward and to take an interest in administrative affairs. It was however not possible to nominate more than one lady as a member of the present Council. It is hoped that in the future, women will take the field in open competition with men in the general constituencies and will gain a fair proportion of the seats.

6. In our laying thus the foundation of truly popular government in this State, I hope it will not be considered out of place if I remind you of the high qualities of head and heart which responsible administrations demand of their votaries. The vast powers with which you are invested will have to be exercised by you in sacred trust for the promotion of the public or common good. Eschewing communal jealousies and private or parochial interests, you should strive to secure the moral improvement of the people in general and the material prosperity of the country as a whole. Differences in angles of vision are no doubt inevitable and heated discussions may be their natural result, but it is on such occasions that, animated by the spirit of mutual toleration and good-will, you will have need to call to your aid all your self-restraint and forbearance. It should be your duty to maintain the dignity of the Council, and to this end your acts and words should be modelled on the best Parliamentary traditions. It is fallacious to assume that the interests of Government and the interests of the people are different or are antagonistic. The aims and aspirations of both are and ought to be identical. Both should strive for the prosperity of the people and the country and so far as our State is concerned, we must look forward with confidence to a long era of harmonious co-operation of the two in their efforts to reach their common goal.

7. Let me also join His Highness and offer a prayer that this Council which has been brought into

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

existence during my Diwanship may discharge the duties entrusted to it with ever-increasing efficiency, prove its fitness for the exercise of augmented powers and successfully promote the prosperity, contentment and happiness of all classes of His Highness' subjects."

Then the Diwan prorogued the Council.

The Diwan at the instance of His Highness the Maharaja, had the guests and the members of the Council served with refreshments.

[The following Members were present.

1. M. R. Ry. C. Achyuta Menon Avl., B. A.
2. " K. Achyuta Menon Avl., B. A. & B. L.
3. " V. K. Aravindaksha Menon Avl.
4. " O. R. Chummar Avl., B. A. & B. L.
5. " Chakko Cheruvattur, T. Avl.
6. " P. Damodara Menon Avl., B. A.
7. " A. Eachara Menon Avl.
8. " I. Ephraim Ambuken Avl.
9. " George Chakyamuri Avl., B. A. & B. L.
10. " A. Govinda Menon Avl.
11. " K. Govinda Menon Avl., M. A. (Oxon);
12. " E. Ikkanda Wariar Avl., B. A. & B. L
13. " Chelur Ittiravi Namburi Avl.
14. " K. P. Karuppan Avl.
15. " Rao Sahib T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar Avl., B. A.
16. " V. K. Kochchunni Menon Avl., B. A. & B. L.
17. S. S. Koder Esq.
18. M. R. Ry. M. Konthu Menon Avl.
19. " K. Krishna Menon Avl., B. A. & B. L.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly